

In the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:
establishing a virtual clinic on a network;
the virtual clinic having working relationships with medical professionals;
the virtual clinic having working relationships with patients;
the virtual clinic being associated with diagnostic centers, each diagnostic center having diagnostic testing equipment for generating diagnostic test results, a particular diagnostic center being other than a treatment-providing facility or a patient's private home;
the virtual clinic storing, for each diagnostic center, the location of the diagnostic center and identification of at least a portion of the diagnostic testing equipment at the diagnostic center;
receiving a request for medical services from the particular patient by the virtual clinic;
establishing a real-time electronic communications link between the particular patient and a particular medical professional by the virtual clinic; ~~and~~
receiving a request for a diagnostic test by the particular patient from the particular medical professional;
enabling the particular patient to obtain the location of at least one diagnostic center having diagnostic test equipment corresponding to the diagnostic test;
obtaining particular diagnostic test results by the particular patient at one of the particular diagnostic centers; and
communicating the diagnostic test results to the particular medical professional.
2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
accessing a web page by the patient that is provided by the virtual clinic;
receiving, by the virtual clinic, information about the patient; and
based upon the information about the patient, selecting a medical professional.
3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)
5. (Currently amended) A method for delivering patient care, comprising:
 - establishing a virtual clinic on a network;
 - the virtual clinic having a working relationship with an insurance carrier, the insurance carrier having a patient to which the insurance carrier provides benefits;
 - the virtual clinic having a working relationship with one or more medical professionals;
 - the virtual clinic being associated with diagnostic centers, a particular diagnostic center being other than a treatment-providing facility or a patient's private home, each diagnostic center having diagnostic testing equipment;
 - the virtual clinic storing, for each diagnostic center, the location of the diagnostic center and identification of at least a portion of the diagnostic testing equipment at the diagnostic center;
 - receiving a request for medical services from the patient;
 - establishing a real-time electronic communications link between the patient and a particular medical professional ~~one~~ of the one or more medical professionals by the virtual clinic;
 - and
 - receiving a request for a diagnostic test by the patient from the particular medical professional;
 - enabling the patient to obtain the location of at least one diagnostic center having diagnostic testing equipment corresponding to the diagnostic test;
 - obtaining particular diagnostic test results by the patient at one of the particular diagnostic centers; and
 - communicating the diagnostic test results to the particular medical professional.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, further comprising:
 - accessing a web page by the patient that is provided by the insurance carrier;
 - receiving, by the insurance carrier, information from the patient through the web page;
 - forwarding the information to the virtual clinic;
 - based upon the information, selecting a medical professional.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) A system comprising:

a network;

a medical professional device for use by a medical professional and enabled to receive information from the network and to submit responses on the network;

a patient device for use by a patient and enabled to submit information on the network and to receive responses from the network;

~~a diagnostic center~~ diagnostic centers, each having diagnostic testing equipment, a particular diagnostic center ~~and~~ being other than a treatment-providing facility or the patient's private home; and

a virtual clinic associated with the diagnostic centers, the virtual clinic storing the location of each diagnostic center and identification of at least a portion of the diagnostic testing equipment at each diagnostic center, the virtual clinic being configured to receive information and responses from the network, to select the medical professional based upon the information provided by the patient, ~~and~~ to enable real-time electronic communication of the information and the responses between the medical professional device and the patient device, and to enable the patient to obtain the location of at least one diagnostic center having diagnostic testing equipment corresponding to a diagnostic test requested by the medical professional ~~the virtual clinic associated with the diagnostic center.~~

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) The system as in claim 9, the system further comprising:
a hospital enabled to receive the information from the network and to submit responses.
14. (Canceled)
15. (Canceled)
16. (Currently amended) A system comprising:
a network;
a medical professional device for use by a medical professional and enabled to receive information from the network and to submit responses on the network;
a patient device for use by a patient and enabled to make a request for medical services, to submit the information on the network and to receive the responses from the network;
~~a diagnostic center~~ diagnostic centers, each having diagnostic testing equipment, a particular diagnostic center ~~and~~ being other than a treatment-providing facility or the patient's private home;
an insurance carrier being configured to receive the request for medical services from the patient and to forward the request to a virtual clinic, the virtual clinic being associated with the diagnostic centers and storing the location of each diagnostic center and identification of at least a portion of the diagnostic testing equipment at each diagnostic center, the virtual clinic being configured to receive the information and the responses from the network, the virtual clinic being configured to select the medical professional based upon the information provided by the patient, the virtual clinic being configured to enable real-time electronic communication of the information and the responses between the medical professional device and the patient device, and the virtual clinic being capable of enabling the patient to obtain the location of at least one diagnostic center having diagnostic test equipment corresponding to a diagnostic testing requested by the medical professional ~~the virtual clinic being associated with the diagnostic center.~~
17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)
19. (Canceled)
20. (Previously Presented) The system as in claim 16, the system further comprising:
a hospital enabled to receive the information from the network and to submit responses.
21. (Canceled)
22. (Canceled)
23. (Canceled)
24. (Canceled)
25. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:
establishing a virtual clinic including an electronic portal to medical care, the virtual clinic having capabilities for:
 - (a) enabling a patient to contact the virtual clinic,
 - (b) collecting information on the patient's medical condition,
 - (c) identifying at least one medical professional based on the collected information, and
 - (d) accessing the patient's medical records;establishing a working relationship with the least one medical professional to provide medical services to patients referred via the virtual clinic, the medical professional providing information relating to qualifications for use during a selection process;
providing diagnostic testing equipment at diagnostic centers ~~a diagnostic center~~ associated with the virtual clinic, a particular ~~the~~ diagnostic center being other than a treatment-providing facility or the patient's private home; and
enabling by the virtual clinic real-time electronic communication between a patient

device operated by the patient and a medical professional device operated by the medical professional to transmit the information regarding the patient's condition, diagnostic test requests by the medical professional, results from the diagnostic testing equipment, and recommended treatment; and

enabling the virtual clinic to inform the patient of the location of at least one diagnostic center having diagnostic testing equipment corresponding to a diagnostic test requested by the medical professional.

26. (Canceled)
27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25 further comprising:
submitting information relating to medical licenses by the medical professional; and
comparing a patient's residence with the medical professional's medical license by the virtual clinic.
28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25 further comprising:
providing the patient with access to the diagnostic testing equipment.
29. (Canceled)
30. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the virtual clinic has a presence on at least one Internet site.
31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the virtual clinic further has the capability for at least one insurance company to refer patients to the virtual clinic.
32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the virtual clinic has the capability for at least one hospital to refer patients to the virtual clinic.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the virtual clinic has the capability for informing a medical professional of diagnostic testing equipment results.
34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the virtual clinic has the capability for allowing a medical professional to access and update a patient's medical records.
35. (Canceled)
36. (Canceled)
37. (Canceled)
38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising:
contracting with at least one hospital to provide access to diagnostic testing equipment to patients of the virtual clinic.
39. (Canceled)
40. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:
a patient contacting a virtual clinic;
the patient providing information on his medical condition to the virtual clinic;
the virtual clinic identifying a medical professional based on the patient-provided medical condition information;
the virtual clinic enabling real-time electronic communication between a patient device operated by the patient and a medical professional device operated by the identified medical professional;
the patient corresponding electronically with the medical professional;
the medical professional requesting the patient to take a diagnostic test;

the virtual clinic informing the patient of the location of at least one diagnostic center associated with the virtual clinic and having diagnostic testing equipment corresponding to the diagnostic test;

the virtual clinic enabling the patient to access a particular diagnostic center ~~being associated with the virtual clinic and~~ being other than a treatment-providing facility or the patient's private home, the diagnostic center having diagnostic testing equipment corresponding to the diagnostic test;

the particular diagnostic test equipment providing the diagnostic test results to the medical professional; and

the medical professional informing the patient of recommended treatment.

41. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
at least one insurance company referring at least one patient to the virtual clinic.
42. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
at least one hospital referring at least one patient to the virtual clinic.
43. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
the virtual clinic receiving payment for medical services provided.
44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, further comprising:
the virtual clinic forwarding a portion of the received payment to the medical professional.
45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
informing the medical professional of the diagnostic testing equipment available to the patient.
46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, further comprising:

at least one medical professional providing information relating to medical licenses and the virtual clinic comparing a patient's residence with a medical professional's medical license.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the step of identifying a medical professional based on the patient-provided medical condition information comprises medical professionals providing information relating to qualifications and the virtual clinic comparing the patient-provided medical condition information with the medical-professional-provided information relating to qualifications.

48. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
the patient contracting with the virtual clinic to provide payment in return for receiving medical services.

49. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
at least one insurance company reimbursing the virtual clinic for medical services provided to at least one patient.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
at least one physician reimbursing the virtual clinic for directing the patient to the medical professional.

51. (Canceled)

52. (Canceled)

53. (Canceled)

54. (Canceled)

55. (Canceled)

56. (Canceled)

57. (Canceled)

58. (Currently amended) A virtual clinic, comprising:

a web page for enabling a patient to request consultation with a medical professional and to provide medical condition information;

a medical professional database for storing contact information and qualifications for a set of medical professionals;

a medical professional selection component for selecting one of the medical professionals in the medical professional database based on predetermined criteria;

a communication component for enabling real-time electronic communication between the selected medical professional and the patient;

memory for storing the location of each of a plurality of diagnostic centers associated with the virtual clinic and identification of diagnostic test equipment at each of the plurality of diagnostic centers, at least one of the diagnostic centers being other than a treatment-providing facility or the patient's private home;

a communication component for informing the patient of at least one diagnostic center having diagnostic test equipment corresponding to a diagnostic test requested by the selected medical professional; and

a diagnostic test equipment communication component for communicating with particular diagnostic test equipment at one of the diagnostic centers to obtain diagnostic test results of a patient taking the diagnostic test requested by the selected medical professional, ~~the diagnostic test equipment being maintained at a location other than a treatment-providing facility or the patient's private home.~~

59. (Previously Presented) The virtual clinic of claim 58, wherein the predetermined criteria involves one of the qualifications of the medical professional, the patient's medical condition information, the time of the request, scheduling information, location of the patient, patient

request, patient preferences, availability of a patient's standard physician, insurance information, employer information, and a prior medical professional assisting the patient.

60. (Previously Presented) The virtual clinic of claim 58, further comprising a patient records accessing component for communicating with a patient records database to provide patients records information to the medical professional.

61. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the particular diagnostic center is located in an apartment complex.

62. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the particular diagnostic center is located in a workplace of the particular patient.

63. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the particular diagnostic center is located in a public facility.

64. (New) The system of claim 9, wherein the particular diagnostic center is located in an apartment complex.

65. (New) The system of claim 9, wherein the particular diagnostic center is located in a workplace of the patient.

66. (New) The system of claim 9, wherein the particular diagnostic center is located in a public facility.

67. (New) The clinic of claim 58, wherein the location is an apartment complex.

68. (New) The system of claim 58, wherein the location is a workplace of the patient.

69. (New) The system of claim 58, wherein the location is a public facility.